

## BOOK REVIEWS

**DIAGNOSIS IN GYNAECOLOGY—A Classification of Gynaecological Diseases Based on Aetiology and the Clinical Logic of Diagnosis.** By James V. Ricci, A.B., M.D., Clinical Professor of Gynaecology and Obstetrics, New York Medical College. The Blakiston Company, Philadelphia & Toronto, 1948. 259 pp., no illustration.

This small volume resulted from efforts to teach gynecological history-taking and examination to undergraduate medical students at the New York Medical College. It may have some value in that connection, but its value to the practitioner seems doubtful. The author has taken information which is available in all of the standard gynecologic textbooks and rearranged it to suit his own devices. After brief descriptions of pelvic anatomy and embryology, as well as the female sex hormones, there follow many details about the performance of gynecological examinations. Under "special types of examination" there is no mention of the Papanicolaou smear technique. The rest of the volume concerns itself with classifying pelvic disorders on the basis of what the author insists upon spelling "aetiology." Throughout the book the diphthong is used also in the word "gynaecology." The author's concept of the meaning of the word etiology seems at variance with the generally accepted definition. One wonders what is gained, for example, by stating that "diseases of the uterus result from the following aetiological factors" and then setting forth a list containing every conceivable uterine disorder, all the way from pyometra to bullet wound of the uterus. There is also some mention of pregnant uteri having been pierced by bulls' horns. Certainly this must occur infrequently in New York City. While the reviewer finds no serious errors of fact in this text, it seems fair to say that it contains very little information which will be of value outside the classroom from which it sprang.

\* \* \*

**PRACTICAL BACTERIOLOGY, HEMATOLOGY, AND PARASITOLOGY.** By E. R. Stitt, M.D., Rear Admiral, Medical Corps, and Surgeon General, U. S. Navy, Retired; Paul W. Clough, M.D., Physician-in-Charge of the Diagnostic Clinic, Johns Hopkins Hospital; and Sara E. Branham, M.D., Senior Bacteriologist, National Institute of Health, and Contributors. Tenth Edition. The Blakiston Company, Philadelphia.

Republished for the first time since 1938, the tenth edition of this book, which was originally published by Rear Admiral E. R. Stitt in 1909 and since that time has been a very popular textbook covering principally the techniques of bacteriology, hematology, and parasitology, has been entirely revised by Stitt, Clough, and Branham and is contributed to by other authors.

Primarily a text on laboratory technique, it covers the various subjects in a complete and acceptable manner. It is particularly outstanding in the fields of bacteriology, serology, and parasitology. The section on diseases of the blood is excellent when viewed in the light of its obvious functions, but should not be confused with a reference text giving an exhaustive coverage of hematology.

Its outline and the manner in which much detail is presented continue to make it one of the most outstanding books in this field. The references to clinical applications, which form an integral part of each topic which is presented, increase its practicability. It must not be considered just a textbook for medical students and technicians. It is designed to fill a much greater function, and strengthened by the section covering the techniques of the examination of various body fluids and organs, it becomes a practical text, not only for those in the profession of medicine who routinely or occasionally perform laboratory procedures, but also for those re-

search workers, clinicians, or teachers who are true medical scientists.

The material is well arranged in such manner that the text is readily usable for specific reference work. The bacteriology, immunology, hematology, and parasitology are very properly conveniently separated from each other with overlapping of material only for purposes of clarity and accuracy.

The book can heartily be recommended as a valuable text for students and as a useful guide and reference book for the practitioner of medicine.

\* \* \*

**MEDULLARY NAILING OF KÜNTSCHER.** By Lorenz Böhler, M.D., Director of the Hospital for Accidents in Vienna; Professor of Surgery at the University of Vienna. First English Edition revised by the author. Translated from the Eleventh German Edition by Hans Tretter, M.D., Surgeon in Charge of the New Jersey Manufacturers Hospital. The Williams & Wilkins Company, Baltimore. 1948. \$7.00.

Like many other fracture surgeons Lorenz Böhler has always sought a simple method of internal fixation which could be applied *without opening the fracture site*. In 1940 Küntscher described such a method. This consists in the insertion of a long, hollow, strong steel (V<sub>2</sub>A) rod through a small incision at one end of the bone down through the medullary canal across the fracture site deep into the distal fragment. When Böhler saw this procedure it appealed most strongly to him. Here at last was a simple method of securing internal fixation *without opening the fracture*. Thus the important fracture hematoma was preserved, risk of infection was practically nil, early muscle function and joint movement along with weight bearing was possible and finally *callus formation and fracture healing were accelerated*. It was fantastic. He quickly resolved to adopt the method. Anatomical studies were carried out to determine the exact width, length and direction of the medullary canals so that length, width and curve of nail could be accurately figured.

Two hundred sixty-eight cases have been operated upon in the Viennese Hospital for traumatic surgery. This series embraces not only fresh fractures of all the long bones, but includes many old ununited fractures, nonunions, malunions, pseudo-arthroses, bone shortening operations, spontaneous fractures, etc. In addition Böhler has had an opportunity to study the records, x-rays, patients, and end results of over 300 Küntscher nailing operations performed in other hospitals.

This extensive experience permits the author to describe in great detail the instruments and apparatus required, the exact technique for inserting the nail, the kind of case suitable for the method, the postoperative care, and the reasons for possible success or failure.

The method, which at first seemed so simple, has in fact turned out to be so complicated that it quite obviously can be used only by surgeons of great experience with much expensive and complicated apparatus available. For example, a fractured femur requires a specially designed traction frame, 36 special instruments or apparatus which includes two mobile fluoroscopic units, a fluoroscopist, x-ray technician and an anesthetist in addition to the surgeon, his assistants and the regular operating room nurses.

Careful study of over 600 cases has brought to light an "almost unbelievable number" of complications and end results. Death, comparatively frequent infection, faulty position of fragments, faulty position of nail, splitting bone with nail, rotation of fragments, migration of nail into joint, broken nail, and many others have been recorded.